

THE LITERARY TIMES:

A CRITICAL JOURNAL OF MODERN LITERATURE.

NUMBER IX.

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1863.

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SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1863.

‘SENSATION.’

THE curious manner in which the press has adopted the word ‘sensation,’ and the singular infelicity with which it has been applied to every successful work in literature and on the stage, would seem to imply that the fourth estate itself is not free from epidemics, and that it will rush at a new word or a new idea with as much eagerness as do that public whose taste is so often the subject of its censure. According to the current opinions of our journals, ‘sensation’ sermons, ‘sensation’ novels, ‘sensation’ histories, ‘sensation’ magazines, ‘sensation’ pictures, and, in fact, sensational amusements of every kind, are the only intellectual food upon which the British public now fatten. Everything which is fortunate enough to meet with general acceptance is dubbed with this term, and it can hardly be a matter of surprise that a popular author or painter should experience some pain in the thought that his talent should have brought him within the scope of its sneer. It is a word that an unsuccessful writer aims at his more fortunate brother behind the screen of a newspaper, and it is a word, under the cover of which a lazy critic reposes, to save himself the trouble of thought. To analyse the merits of a production, and to account for its popularity, are employments neither so easy nor so agreeable to the journalist as the application of a single pungent term which seems to express a great deal more than he knows what to say. This is the cause of the use of ‘slang,’ which is merely an easy way of dressing up the commonest thoughts in smart language. It has always been a favourite form of expression with weak young men, but we hardly expected that the press would follow their example, and talk ‘fast’ to gain the admiration of the thoughtless.

‘Sensation’ we regard as the most unmeaning and stupid of the epithets of the day, and would like to know whether it is more applicable to our novels and dramas than it would have been to Sir Walter Scott’s ‘Waverley,’ or to Lord Byron’s ‘Don Juan.’ Both were produced under decidedly sensational circumstances, and owed their success as much to the incidents connected with their origin as to the talent displayed in their pages. To go back still farther, what could have been better specimens of sensation works than Richardson’s ‘Clarissa Harlowe,’ or Junius’s ‘Letters?’ Was not the fate of Richardson’s heroine the one topic of talk throughout England? and was it not shrewdly withheld by the author until public curiosity almost went mad? The mystery which surrounded ‘Junius’ was as well calculated to create a sensation as any of our modern contrivances; although it may have been caused in the first instance by political reasons, it certainly added greatly to the interest with which the letters were regarded. We are therefore justified in saying that, having in view our extended population and increased education, we are not more, but we think are decidedly less sensational, than were our ancestors, and that the indiscriminate application of the term to all the specimens of modern taste, is merely the abandonment of healthy criticism in favour of a weak system of strong epithets.

In defending our present public and its amusements from the taunts of the press, we are not unmindful of what Mr. Stuart Mill has said on the uniformity of thought and feeling which he finds to exist so greatly at

this time in England — a view which has been brought forward so much in late discussions. This present uniform tone of the public mind, we think, is more apparent now than it was formerly, through the development of the cheap press; but we doubt, if the facts are examined, whether the English public of the nineteenth century would be found to be as monotonous in its sentiments as was the public of one hundred years ago. People now-a-days think freely on the subject of religion—they live according to their own ideas, and they mix on equal terms with those above and below them. Formerly every decent person went to the established church. A man’s position was assigned to him, and he lived according to the customs of his class, with whom he exclusively associated. Now every member of the community professes to have an opinion on all public questions, books, plays, &c., and this opinion is in most cases of little value. It cannot be expected that a barber’s view of Lord Palmerston’s foreign policy, or of a new novel, can be worth very much. He has not time nor education to be a critic, and he is obliged to rely upon his ‘Daily Telegraph’ to supply him with ideas. If, therefore, these ideas now-a-days are rather unvaried, the press alone is responsible for their character. If the English public idolises a minister, makes the fortune of a manager, and enriches a novelist, the credit for such generous treatment is certainly due to the newspapers. The public follows its ‘instructors’ slavishly, and adopts their errors with as much cheerfulness as it does their more useful lessons.

The English press hardly ever discusses any question, or book, or play, on its own merits. Public topics are treated according to the traditional policy of the paper. Books are reviewed according to the social position of the author, and plays are criticised according to the relations between the paper and the theatre. When it is considered that, in addition to these influences, nearly all the writers on the press are members of certain literary clubs, and that frequent communion together amalgamates their views, besides bringing the critic and the criticised into personal relation, it can hardly be such a matter of wonder that the tone of the press should be but little varied, and that the public who follows it slavishly should be rather uniform in its taste. It is, however, somewhat surprising that the press, which creates every success, should turn round on its obedient readers, and taunt them with ‘sensational’ desires and vulgar likings. This is ingratitude of the worst description, and deserves the strongest censure. Why should not the public enjoy its ‘Lady Audley’s Secret,’ and ‘Colleen Bawn,’ after hearing that they are so excellent, without the fear of that dreadful sneer of ‘sensation’ with which it is so often assailed? The press has its own amusements and specialities, and no one wishes to interfere with them. Does not the ‘Daily Telegraph’ devote its fourth leading article to the lives of pretty horse-breakers—and does not the ‘Times’ insert fictitious letters about *Anonyma* towards the wane of the season? These are sensational features, but no one has the bad taste to say so. We pray the press, therefore, to drop this word, the effect of which is so prejudicial to itself, and to regard every new effort of genius according to its own merits, leaving to the dear old-fashioned ‘Quarterly Review,’ a term which is useful in enlivening its superannuated pages.

PICTURES OF GERMAN LIFE.*

THE great success which attended the translation of Gustav Freytag’s first series of ‘Pictures of German Life,’ has induced Mrs. Malcolm to present the English reader with a translation of the second series, from the same gifted author. The name of the translator is a sufficient guarantee that her work is well performed. The object of the author in his former series, was a delineation of the life of Germany during the period of the Reformation and the Thirty Years’ War; his aim in the present, is to trace the development of German character from that time down to the present day. Of the earlier portion of this period he says:—

‘Whilst everywhere else the State might be compared to the body whose abundant energy calls forth the creative development of the nation, in Germany, since the Thirty Years’ War, owing to the awakening popular energy, a new national civilisation has gradually arisen in a shattered, decaying government, under corrupting and humiliating political influences of every kind,—first dependent upon strangers; then independent and free; finally, a shining pattern for other people, producing blossoms of poetry, and blossoms of science of the greatest beauty, of the highest nobility, and the greatest inward freedom: it was developed by individuals who were deficient in just that discipline of the mind and character which is only given to them when they are members of a great State. The German culture of the eighteenth century was indeed the wonderful creation of a soul without a body.’

The work is divided into chapters, the first of which is devoted to a sketch of the life of the German peasant, and the second to the life of the lower nobility. To the great majority of readers, these two chapters will probably prove the most interesting in the book, for the sketches of the various phases of life and manners at different times, between the years 1240 and 1800, are prettily painted, and at the same time convey a great deal of information upon a subject but little known in England. This remark in truth applies to the whole book, but, as we think, more especially to the first two chapters. Here is a picture of the peasant in the tenth century:—

‘The peasant in the time of Otto the Great had become a good Christian, but the old customs of the heathen faith still surrounded him in his house and fields; his phantasy filled nature, beasts, and plants with warm life. Whatever flew or bounded over his fields, whether hare, wolf, fox, or raven, were to him familiar forms, to whose character and fate he gave a human turn, and of whom with cheerful spirit he used to sing in heroic terms, or tell beautiful tales. In his house were numerous trained birds; and those were valued the highest which could comport themselves most like men. The starling repeated in a comic way the paternoster; the jackdaw welcomed him on his return home; and he rejoiced in the dance of the trained bear. He loved his cattle with all his heart, he honoured his horses, oxen, cows, and dogs with the names of the ancient gods, to whom he still continued to attach ideas of dignity and sanctity. This craving for familiar intercourse with all that surrounded him was the peculiar characteristic of the German peasant in the olden time. This great love of beasts, tame birds, dogs, and horses continued long, as late as Luther’s time, a few years before the great peasant war. A true-hearted peasant having in the fullness of his joy kissed his decorated foal upon the neck, a lurking monk who

* Pictures of German Life in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. Second series. By Gustav Freytag. Translated by Mrs. Malcolm. London: Chapman & Hall. 1863.

happened to see it, cited him before the ecclesiastical court, and inflicted a heavy fine upon him, because it was unseemly. On this account Kars-thans clenched his fist at the priests. In the eleventh century the countryman still sang by his hearth the stirring heroic songs, the subject-matter of which is in part older than the great exodus,—those of Siegfried and the Virgin of Battle Brun-hild, of the treachery of the Burgundian King, Gunthar; of the struggle of the strong Walther with Hagen, and of the downfall of the Niebelungen. Though his language was clumsy in writing, it flowed from his lips solemn and sonorous, with full terminations, and rich in alternations of the vowels. Still had the solemnly spoken word in prayer, in forms of law, and in invocations, a mysterious power of magic effect: not only is the meaning of the speech, but also its sound, full of significance. A wise saw was the source of great good fortune to him who possessed it: it could be bought and sold, and the buyer could return it again if it was useless to him.'

In the middle of the thirteenth century, he seems to have been a very jovial personage. Here, at least, we have the sunny side of the picture presented to us:—

'When sunny May comes, then the maidens get their holiday attire from the press, and twine wreaths for their own hair and that of their friends. Thus they go, crowned with garlands and adorned with ribbons, the hand-glass as an ornament by their sides, with their playfellows to the green; full a hundred maidens and women are there assembled for the dance. Thither also hasten the men, smart also is their dress, the waistcoat trimmed with coloured buttons, perhaps even with bells, which for a long time had been the most choice attire of persons of distinction; there is no want of silk, nor in winter of fur trimmings. The belt is well inlaid with shining metal, the coat of mail is quilted in the dress, and the point of the sword, in walking, clinks against the heel. The proud youths are defiant, take great pleasure in fight, and are jealous of their own importance. Vehement is the energy displayed in the great dances, they are venturesome in their springs, jubilant in their joy; everywhere there is the poetry of the enjoyment of the senses. The chorus of bystanders sing loudly to the dance, and the maidens join softly in the melody. Still greater becomes our astonishment when we examine closer the rhythm and words of these old national dances; there is a grace not only in the language but in its social relation, which reminds us much more of the ancient world than of the feelings of our country people. Introductory strophes, which extoll in countless variations the advent of spring, are followed by others which have little coherence, and are, as it were, improvised, like the *schadner hüpfeln*, which is still retained in Upper Germany among the popular dances. The subject is often a dispute between mother and daughter, the daughter dressing herself for the festivity, the mother wishing to keep her back from the dance; or it is the praise of a beautiful maiden, or droll enumerations of dancing couples; often the text conveys attacks upon opposite parties amongst the dancers, who are depicted and turned into ridicule. Parties are easily formed amongst the dancers, the opponents are challenged in caustic verses; the glory of the young lad is not to put up with any slight, and to be the most vigorous dancer, cheeriest singer, and the best fighter. The dances are followed by feasting, with loud and boisterous merriment. The winter brings new pleasures; the men amuse themselves with dice, and with sledging on the ice, and the people assemble in a large room for the dance. Then stools and tables are carried out: the music consists of two violins; the conductor begins the melody, and the head dancer leads off. The rondes and other dances are various in character; more antique and popular is the measure and text of the chain dance in the old national style of two parallel rows; the winter dances are more artistic and modish. For in the song dances, which we may consider as the beau-

tified copy of the old rhythm and text, the courtly law of triplets in the strophes is everywhere followed; one perceives in them the imitation of Romanesque knightly customs. Among the different kinds of dances may be mentioned the *Selave Reidawae*. The noble dances and drinks with the peasants in these village diversions, though with the pride of more refined manners; but however much he may be inclined to ridicule those around him, he fears them, not only their fists and weapons, but also the strokes of their tongues. The long-haired and curly peasant offers the goblet to the *Junker*, and snatches it back as he attempts to grasp it, places it then, according to court custom before drinking, on his head, and dances through the room; then the knight rejoices if the goblet falls from the lout's head and is split over him; but the knight has no scruple in making use of contemptuous oaths, when the indignant village youths call him to account for having shown too much attention to their wives and sweethearts.'

But if such was his merry-making, he had also his hardships; and his condition of villeinage was no light burden and grievance:—

'The children also of villeins were subject to compulsory service. If they were capable of work they were brought before the authorities, and, if these demanded it, had to serve some time, frequently three years, on the farm. To serve in other places it was necessary to have a permit, which must be bought. Even those who had already served elsewhere had once a year—frequently about Christmas—to present themselves to the lord of the manor for choice. If the child of a villein entered into a trade or any other occupation, a sum had to be paid to the authorities for a letter of permission. It was considered a mitigation of the old remains of feudalism, when it was decided that the daughters of peasants might marry on to other properties without indemnifying their lord. But then the new lord had to greet the other in a friendly letter in acknowledgement of this emancipation. The price which the villein had to give for the emancipation of himself and his family varied extremely, according to the period and the district. Under Frederick II, it was reduced in Silesia to one ducat per head. But this was an unusually favourable rate for the villein. In Rügen, at a still later date, the emancipation was left to the valuation of the proprietor; it could even be refused: a fine-looking youth had there to pay full a hundred and fifty, and a pretty girl fifty or sixty, thalers.

'But the peasant was employed in other ways by the landed proprietor. He was bound to aid, with his hands and teams, in the cultivation of the estate; he was also bound to act as messenger. Whoever wished to go to the town had first to ask the bailiff and lord of the manor whether they had any orders. No householder could, except in special cases, remain a night out of the village without the previous sanction of the magistrate of the place. He was obliged to furnish a night watch of two men for the nobleman's mansion. He had, when a child of the lord of the manor was to be married, to bring a contribution of corn, small cattle, honey, wax, and linen to the castle; finally, he had almost everywhere to carry to his lord his rent-hens and eggs, the old symbol of his dependence for house and farm.'

Of the present condition of the German peasant, our author says:—

'The agriculture of the German peasantry may still be considered as not having, on the whole, reached that point which is necessary for an energetic development of our national strength; nevertheless, we have reason to rejoice in having made great progress in this direction. Intellect is everywhere incessantly occupied in introducing to the simple countryman new discoveries—machines, seeds, and a new method of cultivation. In some favoured districts the agriculture of the small farmer can scarcely be distinguished from the well-studied system of the larger model farms. Nor has the German peasant, in the times of the

deepest depression, like the oppressed Slavonian, ever lost the instinct of self-acquisition. For the very qualities which are his characteristics, enduring systematic industry and strict parsimony, are the groundwork of the highest earthly prosperity.'

The descendants of the old robber-knights had experienced a great change. The old predatory days were over, and many of these noble scions, with no occupation and no property, passed their time in paying visits wherever they could obtain food and drink, and riding about in bands, were known under the name of *Krippenreiters*, as a nuisance and a pest all over the country which they infested. How they managed to maintain their wives and children was a mystery, and in many cases their families actually used to beg their food from day to day. Some of their number were slightly better off. Here is a description of their houses:—

'These landowners dwelt in buildings of clay and wood, roofed with straw or shingles, — a sufficient number of casual descriptions and drawings have been preserved to us,—across the roof lay the great fire-ladders; the front and back doors of the hall were provided with crossbars for closing them at night. On the ground-floor was the large sitting-room; near it the spacious kitchen, which was a warm abode for the servants; next the sitting-room there was a walled vault, with iron grating to the window, and if possible with iron doors, as a protection against thieves and fire,—whatever valuables a landowner possessed were kept there, and if a sum of money was deposited there, a special watchman was placed before the house. Above this vault, in the upper floor, was the bedroom of the master of the house; there was the marriage-bed, and there also was a concealed safe, either in the wall or floor, wherein some plate and the jewellery of the women were kept. The children, the tutor, and the housekeeper slept in small closets, which could not be warmed, divided by trellis-work. Sometimes a wooden gallery was attached to the upper floor, the "little pleasure walk;" there the linen was dried, the farmyard inspected, and the work of the women done. The house was under the special care of some old trooper, or poor cousin, who slept within as watcher. Wild dogs roamed about the farmyard and round the house during the night; these were specially intended to guard against beggars and vagrants.'

Nearly every one who has travelled in Germany has been present at the national shooting festivals, or has seen the marksmen on their way to the scene of contest with their rifles and bows and arrows. The shooting festival has declined in importance now-a-days, although it is probable that under the guise of rifle contests it will again attain much of its former interest and value. Our author assigns a very great influence to these shooting festivals in developing the citizen class, and gives us full details as to their origin, progress, ordering, &c., including the duties of the *Pritschmeister*, a sort of Merry Andrew, who acts as master of the ceremonies. The prizes, the chief of which in olden times was often a serf-maiden, &c., as well as the other sports and pastimes which often accompanied these gatherings, are also described. This was the manner of the shooting:—

'Opposite to the place of the target, in a special wooden building, were the stands of the shooters. But their method of shooting appears striking to us. Before the beginning of the course, a *Pritschmeister* went over the shooting-ground with fifes and drums, and called the marksmen by divisions to their stands. They pressed forward to it in haste, and sat in rows, according to regulation, by lot, each in the stand to which his name was affixed. As long as the division was shooting, no

one left his stand, and none of the neighbours must disturb them by word or movement. Thus they sat, cross-bow in hand; then the *Pritschmeister* called out, "Marker set the clock going!" At the signal the hand was set in motion, each "quarter" being signified by the striking of the clock. During this time each marksman was to shoot; he shot sitting—at least such was the custom in the interior of Germany after the middle of the sixteenth century—but they were not allowed to support either themselves or their cross-bows. When the hand had finished its circuit round the clock, the bell sounded, a steel mirror was lowered by a hempen cord, and covered the dial-plate, and a grating either rose from the earth, or descended from the wooded building in front of the butt, in order to guard it from the eager shooters. Then began the labours of the *Nuner*, secretaries, and markers. If the butt was movable, it was turned round. Behind it stood a table for the secretaries, the inscribed bolts were drawn out, the bull's-eye shot, and those in the circles were transcribed, the farthest shot also was noted down. But the marker filled up the holes made by the bolts, blackened the injured places in the butt, and put on a new plate. In this way the collective divisions of marksmen having fired one shot, the bolts were borne in solemn procession with the *Pritschmeister*, fifes and drums, to the shooting-house: there the less successful bolts were placed in the box of their owner, but those which had been distinguished shots were laid in an ornamental wooded *attrape*; in Zwickau, in 1573, it was a large white swan, the city arms. The bolt of the bull's-eye had a place of honour, and the most distant had also a distinguished place. After this first course the distribution of prizes began.

The chapter to which our author has prefixed the heading 'State Policy and the Individual,' is highly interesting, and ably sets forth the evil influence of the Court system which was so widely diffused over the country. But beyond a servile admiration for everything belonging to the Court, the German did not, as a rule, trouble himself much about politics in the seventeenth century:—

"The Germans, even before 1700, were not deficient in political discernment; nay, before the Thirty Years' War, much progress was apparent. But it was their peculiar characteristic that with this comprehension of their dangerous situation, of the helplessness of the Empire, and of its miserable, dislocated state, the people calmly and quietly recognised it with a shake of the head; even their literary teachers were rarely roused to manly indignation, still less to determined will, nor even to form fruitless projects. Thus, the nation in the seventeenth century might be compared to a hopeless invalid, who, free from the excitement of fever, soberly, calmly, and sensibly contemplates his own condition. We know, indeed, that it is our own century which has cured this morbid state of the German people; but we also perceive the cause of the singular, cold, and gloomy objectiveness which became so peculiar to our nation, and of which traces are yet to be discovered in many individuals. It is the disease of a rightly-gifted, genial nature, whose volition has been crushed by the horrors of war and the struggles of fate, and whose warm heart has been benumbed. A clear, circumspect, just spirit remains to the German; noble political enthusiasm is lost to him. He no longer finds pleasure and honour in being the citizen of a great State; he has no nation that he loves, no State that he honours; he is an individual among individuals; he has well-wishers and detractors, good friends and bad enemies, scarcely any fellow-citizens as yet, scarcely yet any countrymen."

There is, however, a capital political squib given here aimed at state policy and government, and we should like to transfer it to our columns if it were not too long for quotation. But while the state system was working harm to the individual, there was another influence

at work doing good, and that was the extraordinary growth of the pietists. Freytag sums up the effects of this influence as follows:—

"Pietism had drawn together large numbers of individuals; it had raised them from the narrowness of mere family life, it had increased in the soul the longing after a deeper spiritual aim, it had introduced new forms of intercourse; here and there the strong distinctions of classes had been broken through, and it had called forth greater earnestness and more outward propriety in the whole nation, but it had not strengthened national union. He who gave himself up to it with zeal, was in great danger of withdrawing himself, with those who were likeminded, from the great stream of life, and of looking down from his solitude, like the shipwrecked man from his island, on the great waste of waters around him."

About 1750 began that period which our author styles 'the dawning of light,' when a great progress began to be made in literature, arts, and sciences, when Germany seemed to awake from her lethargy, and new blood appeared to course through her veins. Journeys between distant towns were still difficult and sometimes dangerous undertakings, but, nevertheless, a greater degree of intercourse began to be developed, and commerce to be established upon a wider basis. But a terrible check came at the close of the eighteenth century, when the waves of revolution burst upon the empire. This period, which Freytag styles the 'Period of Ruin,' was ushered in by the arrival in Germany of 'the white petrels of the Bourbons, precursors of the storm—the emigrants.' The storm swept along upon its appointed course and passed away again, and the German nation once more began to hold up its head. In 1813 came the time of the great struggle for national existence, when the nation rose as one man to shake off the foreign invader. Freytag says:—

"For the German, this period in the life of his nation has a special significance. It was the first time that for many centuries political enthusiasm had burst forth in bright flames among the people. For centuries there had been in Germany nations of individuals, living under the government of princes, for which they had no love or honour, and in which they took no active share. Now, in the hour of greatest danger, the people claimed its own inalienable right in the State. It threw its whole strength voluntarily and joyfully into a death-struggle to preserve its State from destruction."

The great bugbear of Europe was at length shorn of its terrors, and the shattered relics of his 'grand army' were on their way back from the disastrous Russian campaign.

"But those who now returned came in a more pitiable condition than anyone had dreamed of. It was a herd of poor wretches who had entered upon their last journey—they were wandering corpses. A disorderly multitude of all races and nations collected together; without a drum or word of command, and silent as a funeral procession, they approached the city. They were all without weapons or horses, none in perfect uniform, their cloths ragged and dirty, mended with patches from the dress of peasants and their wives. They had hung over their heads and shoulders whatever they could lay hands on, as a covering against the deadly penetrating cold; old sacks, torn horse-cloths, carpets, shawls, and the fresh skins of cats and dogs; Grenadiers were to be seen in large sheepskins. Cuirassiers wearing women's dresses of coloured baize, like Spanish mantles. Few had helmets or shakos; they wore every kind of head-dress, coloured and white nightcaps like the peasants, drawn low over their faces, a handkerchief or a bit of fur as a protection to their ears, and handkerchiefs also over the lower part of their face; and yet the ears and noses of most were frost-bitten or fiery red, and their dark eyes were

almost extinguished in their cavities. Few had either shoe or boot; fortunate was he who could go through that miserable march with felt socks or large fur shoes, and the feet of many were enveloped in straw, rags, the covering of knapsacks, or the felt of an old hat. All tottered, supported by sticks, lame and limping. The Guards even were little different from the rest; their mantles were scorched, only their bear-skin caps gave them still a military aspect. Thus did officers and soldiers, one with another, crawl along with bent heads, in a state of gloomy stupefaction. All had become forms of horror from hunger, frost, and indescribable misery."

There yet remained a terrible struggle for Germany; but from this hour she was practically free. From this hour Germany had a right to call herself a nation. Freytag concludes what he terms the period of 'illness and recovery' as follows:—

"It was one of the objects of these pages to represent the elevation of the German popular mind, from the devastation of that war, and from the tyrannical rule of the privileged classes. Deliverance has come to the Germans, but they have not recovered their old strength in every sphere of life. But we have a right to hope; for we live in the midst of manly efforts to remove the old wall of partition that still exists between the people and the educated, and to extend, not only to the peasant, but also to the prince, and to the man of family, the blessing of a liberal education."

Our author indulges us with a great many biographies, but his grand hero is Frederick the Great. His admiration for that extraordinary man is so great, that Mr. Carlyle himself does not distance him in this respect. Here is his portrait when he came to the throne, as painted by Seckendorf, the Austrian agent at Berlin:—

"He is agreeable, wears his own hair, has a slouching carriage, loves the fine arts and good eating, would wish to begin his government with some *éclat*, is a better friend of the military than his father, has the religion of a gentleman, believes in God and the forgiveness of sins, loves splendour and refinement, and will newly arrange all the court offices, and bring distinguished people to his court."

Of the influence of Frederick upon the German people, Freytag says:—

"Poor oppressed spirit of the German people, how long it had been since the men betwixt the Rhine and the Oder had felt the pleasure of being esteemed above others among the nations of the earth! Now everything was transformed by the magic of the character of one man. The countryman, as if awaking from a fearful dream, looked out upon the world and into his own heart. Long had they lived lethargically without a past in which they could rejoice, or a noble future on which to place their hopes. Now they found at once that they had a portion in the honours and greatness of the world; that a king and his people, all of their blood, had given an aureola of glory to the German nation—a new purport to the history of civilised man. Now they had all experienced how a great man could struggle, venture, dare, and conquer. Now labour in your study, peaceful thinker, imaginative dreamer; you have learnt during the night to look abroad with smiles, and to hope great things from your own endowments. Try now what will gush from your heart."

The incidents of his life are well told, and the extracts from his letters extremely interesting. But, while looking at all Frederick's acts through rose-coloured spectacles, our author yet gives us a reverse view of the picture, as far as his army is concerned, in the narrative of a deserter. Freytag thus sums up Frederick's character:—

"In the bloom of life he was completely wrapped

up in ambitious feelings; he had wrested from fate all the high and splendid garlands of life,—he, the prince of poets and philosophers, the historian and the general. No triumph that he had ever gained contented him; all earthly fame had become to him accidental, uncertain, and valueless; an iron feeling of duty, incessantly working, was all that remained to him. Amid the dangerous alternation of warm enthusiasm and cool acuteness, his soul had reached its maturity. He had in his own mind, surrounded with a poetical halo, certain individuals; and he despised the multitude about him. But in the struggles of life his egotism disappeared; he lost almost all that was personally dear to him, and he ended by caring little for individuals, whilst the need of living for the whole became ever stronger in him. With the most refined self-seeking, he had desired the highest for himself; and at last, regardless of himself, he gave himself up for the public weal and the lowest. He had entered life as an idealist, and his ideal had not been destroyed by the most fearful experiences, but rather ennobled, exalted, and purified; he had sacrificed many men to his State, but no man so much as himself.

'Great and uncommon did this appear to his contemporaries; greater still to us, who can perceive, even in the present time, the traces of his activity in the character of our people, our political life, our arts, and literature.'

Of the present state of the prospects of Prussia, we are told:—

'The whole political contest of the present day, the struggle against privileges, the constitutional question, and the German question, are all in reality only Prussian questions; and the great difficulty of their solution lies in the position which the Royal house of Prussia have taken up in regard to them. Whenever the Hohenzollerns shall enter warmly and willingly into the needs of the time, their State will attain to its long-wanted strength and soundness. From this they will obtain, almost without trouble, as if it came of itself, the conduct of German interests, the first lead in German life. This is known to friends and enemies.'

In taking our leave of Gustav Freytag, we beg to assure him that, although we have no wish or desire to change our nationality, yet after reading his book we accord him our most hearty sympathy when he says in his concluding lines: 'It has become a pleasure to be a German, and before long it may be considered by foreign nations also to be a high honour.'

WAYFE SUMMERS.*

WAYFE SUMMERS has already met with much commendation in the pages of the 'Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine,' and Mr. Archer is therefore justified in thinking it worthy of the applause of a still larger circle. Ladies are, without doubt, the best judges of works of fiction, and he would indeed be a bold critic who, in face of their praise, would dare to condemn a book. We shall, therefore, content ourselves with performing the part of a judge, and expressing our approval of the verdict that has already been delivered on 'Wayfe Summers.' In doing this humble duty, we may, perhaps, be allowed to offer a few remarks on its strong points, and on those features it possesses in common with a large class of novels.

'Wayfe Summers' affects to be a tale of an 'inner and outer life,' by which expression is meant a history of the inward feelings and outer circumstances that influenced the writer's life. These silent emotions are developed to a great extent, and give an air of

reality to the book; but while serving this purpose, they may be said to be rather tedious than interesting. Wayfe is such a susceptible and nervous young lady that the mere ticking of a clock, or the closing of a door, will draw forth floods of tears from her eyes, and induce reflections on her helpless and desolate situation. These soliloquies continue throughout the book, and form its chief feature. They are, however, rather tiresome. When we expect the disclosure of some important secret, Wayfe gives us instead some of her photographic word-painting, and unnecessarily prolongs our suspense. This, we think, is a mistake. An author may strengthen his tale by giving all the details with a good deal of precision, and by analysing the feelings and thoughts of his principal characters; but when these characters are almost indifferent to us, and the story itself is not sufficiently powerful to warrant the details, we think we have some cause of complaint against him for diffuseness. Mr. Archer seems to have been at great pains never to startle nor surprise his readers. He has a horror of that awful word 'sensation,' and, rather than be considered such a writer, he has avoided the sudden disclosure of one fact of interest. A mystery hangs over every character in the book, but it is in each case so gradually dissolved, that we are never once taken by surprise nor carried off with ex-citement.

The mystery which surrounds every one appears more serious than it really is. There is one gentleman whom we suspect of having committed murder and forgery, but who is really only guilty of neglecting his illegitimate child, and this is the key to the whole book. Above twenty persons, who are acquainted with each other, are suddenly discovered to be blood relations, and these are the only secrets which envelop them. Fathers, mothers, aunts, and uncles, no one suspected to exist, turn up in the most natural way. Wayfe Summers, who first appears as a friendless foundling, is ultimately fitted with a mother and father, two aunts, three uncles, and two grandfathers. Her friends are treated with the same prodigality, there being no less than three forlorn young ladies who are lucky enough to identify their parents among persons about them.

We like this family tone of the book. There are no love passages of any consequence; the chief aim of every one is not to find a sweet-heart, but to recognise some long-lost and dear relative.

In its purpose 'Wayfe Summers' is both new and good. It may safely be placed in the youngest hands, and there is an air of earnestness about it which will attract those who accept the professions of a book without examining too nicely into its actual worth.

THE ODES OF HORACE.*

TRANSLATIONS of Horace are on the increase, a good sign of taste in this our practical age. If we cannot originate, we may still succeed in reproducing. Lord Derby has shown this to some extent, and at the same time given a prestige to the charming occupation of turning Horace into English lyrics. Lord Ravensworth, Whyte Melville, and Mr. Robinson have recently done more than mere pastime in putting forth versions of the Odes, each more or less creditable to English

scholarship. Even novelists, now-a-days, make their heroes quote, ay sometimes even translate, Horace. But the most acceptable version of the cheery Venetian, which late years have seen, is that of Theodore Martin, so racy, lively, and marvellous is it in blending the spirit of the original with the sparkling humour of the modern lyric. It will take rare talent to surpass that version. None but a scholar, confident in his habitation with the original, and especially apt at matching Latin metres with corresponding English equivalents, could venture to take the field against the translator of Horace, Catullus, and Dante. Such an one arises (whether 'par' or 'impar congressus Achilli' remains to be seen) in the first occupant of the Oxford chair of Latin. Before opening his volume we can guess the characteristics of it. There will be true and faultless renderings, for the author's vocation is to discern sound interpretations from unsound; commensurate metres, for the Professor knows Horace so well, that he would think it sin 'to err in less or more,' and accurate rhymes, for Mr. Conington's ear is known to be sensitive and fastidious. What he may lack is warmth, geniality, gay humour, the man-of-the-worldishness peculiar to Horace, but foreign to the Oxford cloisters. A translator of Horace should have been matured in social town life, and in daily intercourse with the amenities, nay, even the levities of existence. Here we can imagine Mr. Conington to be less strong, by reason of his antecedents, though he has, doubtless, many compensating advantages.

The volume before us justifies, in a great measure, our surmises. Its modest preface deprecates the inference that he deems himself an original poet; and professes his motive for publishing to consist in a desire to furnish future translators with hints what to do and what to avoid doing. This principle is that of Professor Arnold, but it has the advantage of being more happily illustrated. Mr. Conington wisely eschews the Hexameter mania, and the kindred insanity of English Sapphies, Alcaies, and so forth. His experiments on metre are English to the back bone. His volume must have this result, at any rate, namely, to aid in settling what measure of conformity to the original a translator of Horace should attain, though in some instances we think he has failed of hitting the analogous metre. His main principle has been to apportion to each Horatian metre, a particular English equivalent, which he generally applies to all specimens of the same class. This is carried out, often, with great acuteness, as for instance in the use of the metre of Milton's Ode to Pyrrha, with the substitution of rhyme for blank verse, as an equivalent for the 4th Asclepiad metre. The rhymed metre gives a pretty plaintive cadence, well suited to this class of odes, as will be seen by this single stanza from the 7th ode of the 3rd book (Quid fles, Asterie):

'Why weep for him, whom sweet Favonian airs
Will waft, next spring, Asteria, back to you,
Rich with Bithynian wares,
A lover fond and true.'

Nor is the adaptation of the metre of Tennyson's 'Dream of Fair Women' to such odes as 'Scriberis Vario,' &c., the third Asclepiad, less successful. A very good illustration of this class is to be found in the fifteenth ode of the first book, ('Pastor cum traheret, &c.') the original of which is so familiar, that we need not transcribe the Latin of the following stanzas:

'Alas! what deaths you launch on Dardan realm!
What toils are waiting, man and horse to tire!
See Pallas trims her agis and her helm,
Her chariot, and her ire.
Him, as the stag forgets to graze for flight,
Seeing the wolf at distance in the glade,
And flies, high panting, you shall fly, despite
Boasts to your leman made.'

How neatly, too, does this metre suit itself to such proverbial phrases as

'Durum! Sed levius fit patientia,
Quicquid corrigerere est nefas.'—i. xxiv.

* Wayfe Summers. A Tale of Inner and Outer Life. By Thomas Archer. London: Low, Son, & Co. 1863.

* The Odes of Horace. Translated into English verse, by John Conington, M.A., Corpus Professor of Latin, Oxford. London: Bell and Daldy. 1863.

'Ah heavy fate! but patience makes more light
What sorrow may not heal.'

Or again :

' Munera navium
Sievos illaqueant duces.'—*iii. xvi.*
' Their cunning snares have won,
Rude captains and their crew.'

We do not wonder that Mr. Conington is more satisfied with his execution of this style of metre than any other, though he reckons next to it that measure which he has applied to the Aleæc odes, the eight-syllable iambic quatrain with alternate rhymes, a common English metre which, he remarks, well matches the grandeur of the Aleæc. Here is a sample :

' Dissolve frigus, ligna super foco,' &c.—*i. ix.*
' Heap high the logs, and melt the cold,
Good Thaliarch; draw the wine we ask
That mellow vintage, four-year-old,
From out the cellar'd Sabinæ cask.'

Again :

' Non restuose grata Calabria,' &c.—*i. xxxi.*
' Not Indian gold or ivory,—no
Nor flocks that o'er Calabria stray;
Nor fields, that Liris, still and slow
Is eating, unperceived, away.'

And once more :

' Virtus, repulsa nescia sordida.'—*iii. ii.*
' True virtue never knows defeat:
Her robes she keeps unsullied still,
Nor takes, nor quits, her eurle seat,
To please a people's veering will.'

No metre, in truth, could better clothe in English, the thoughts which Horace puts into his grand Aleæc: though we must own a slight dissatisfaction with Mr. Conington's rendering of the closing stanzas of that magnificent ode (*i. xxxvii.*) which describes the end of Cleopatra:

' Ausa est jacentem visere regiam,' &c.
' Amidst her ruined halls she stood
Unblench'd, and fearless to the end
Grasp'd the fell snakes, that all her blood
Might with the cold black venom blend,
Death's purpose flushing in her face;
Nor to our ships the glory gave,
That she, no vulgar dame, should grace
A triumph, crownless, and a slave.'

Enough is not made of 'visere' and 'tractare,' nor does the passage at all come up to Martin's version :

' So to her lonely palace halls she came:
With eye serene their desolation view'd.
And the fell asps with fearless fingers wo'd,
To dart their deadliest venom through her frame:
Embracing death with savage calm, that she
Might rob Rome's galley's of their royal prize;
Queen to the last; and ne'er in humbled guise
To swell a triumph's haughty pageantry.'

Were we, however, selecting the happiest specimens of Professor Conington's version, we should seek them in this metre. The graver tones of these stanzas best suit his Muse. He is not apt at frisking in Sapphies: he cannot throw his heart, as does Theodore Martin, into such odes as 'Vixi puellis' and 'Donec gratus eram tibi.' Nor can we say that we think he has achieved great things in fusing the 'Metrum Aleæcium' of such odes as 'Laudabunt alii' (*i. vii.*), and 'Te maris et terre' (*i. xxviii.*), into the heroic quatrain of Gray's 'Elegy.' As we peruse these translations, we miss the completeness of Gray's stanzas, each in itself, and become painfully aware that Conington's imitation-stanzas run one into another with a frequency at which Gray would have shuddered. In the first twelve verses of the xxviiith ode we have no stop at the close of the first stanza, only a comma at the end of the second, and again no stop at the close of the third. Whatever else they remind us of, they do not recall a poem among the most dear to English ears; nor indeed can we

deem them ought but a mistake. A much fitter type of verse for this metre is that which Martin applies to Ode vii. Book i.:

' Many a bard in Juno's honour
Makes the burden of his lyre
Rich Mycenæ, grassy Argos,
Famous for its steeds of fire,'

and which he, perhaps unwisely, has not applied to Ode xxviii. of the same book.

Another experiment of Mr. Conington, blest with but partial success, is his application of the metre of 'Locksley Hall' to odes like the eleventh of the first Book. To that particular ode, indeed, it goes well, as witness the closing lines:

' Dum loquimur, fugerit invida
Ætas. Carpe diem, quam minimum credula
postero.'

' In the moment of our talking, envious time has
ebb'd away;
Seize the present: trust to-morrow e'en as little as
you may.'

But when it is expanded in Ode xviii. to a quatrain, not even the precedent of Mrs. Browning in 'Lady Geraldine's Courtship' can reconcile us to it, as an exponent of that ode:

' Varus, are your trees in planting? Put in none
before the vine
In the rich domain of Tibur, by the walls of
Catilus;
There's a power above that tempers all that sober
brains design,
And the troubles man is heir to *thus* are quelled,
and only *thus*.'

The impulse to cry 'Hold, enough!' possesses us when reading such break-jaw verses, where you forget the first rhyme ere you reach the second; nor have we more praise to bestow on a somewhat similar ode (*iii. xii.*), where great pains have been lavished upon a grievously awkward metre to little purpose.

It would be wearisome to particularise the four diverse ways in which Mr. Conington has dealt with a common metre, that of Ode iii. Book i., 'Sic te diva potens Cyri.' His account of his experiments upon this metre indicate that he has bestowed especial care upon it, yet it is surely inconsistent to puzzle our ears with four various equivalents for one English metre, after laying down a rule that each metre should have a fixed representative; and the fact of the use of these four varieties seems to justify the impression that the professor himself is dissatisfied. Of the four we least like that on which he fixed last, and best that of Book i. Ode xiii., the last four lines of which we give with his translation:

' Felices ter et amplius,
Quos irrupta tenet copula, nec malis
Divulsa querimoniis
Supremâ citius solvet amor die.'

' Happy, happy, happy they,
Whose living love, untroubled by all strife,
Binds them till the last sad day,
Nor parts asunder, but with parting life.'

The metre is suitable, but the first line is affected; and if we set alongside of this version that of Mr. Martin, the latter steals away all hearts and ears :

' Oh! trebly blest, and blest for ever,
Are they whom true affection binds;
In whom no doubts nor janglings sever
The union of their constant minds,
But life in blended current flows
Serene and sunny to its close.'

Passing over other less successful metrical experiments, we turn at length to the Sapphic. This metre Mr. Conington generally matches with three eight-syllable iambics, the first and third rhyming together, while the second rhymes with a fourth verse of four syllables. Examination convinces us that this is an inadequate equivalent. Where the double rhyme of the second and fourth lines, with the addition of a fifth syllable to the latter, is

adopted, as in some cases it is, the result is happy. Thus in Book i. Ode xxii.:

' Integer vita scelerisque purus,' &c. :—
' No need of Moorish archer's craft
To guard the pure and stainless liver;
He wants not, Fuscus, poison'd shaft
To store his quiver.'

And in Book ii. Ode xvi. the full force of the original is adequately brought out. But in most of his translations of Sapphic odes, Mr. Conington has not this recourse to a double rhyme, and thereby, as it strikes us, cripples his movement. For the Sapphic his general substitute is inefficient, as it forces him to omit points that it is essential to the full force of the original to preserve. For example, in Book i. Ode ii.:

' Et superjecto pavidae natarum
Æquore damæ,'

is translated :

' And does were floating, all distraught,
Adown the tide.'

And again :

' Sinistrâ
Labitur ripâ, Jove non probante,
Uxorius annis.
' And, spite of Jove, his banks o'erflows,
Uxorius stream.'

In each of which cases the Latin is imperfectly rendered. So too in Book i. Ode x., the last stanza but one—

' Quin et Atridas, duce te, superbos,' &c.,

is rendered by Conington—

' Strong in thy guidance, Hector's sire
Escap'd the Atride, pass'd between
Thessalian tents, and warder's fire,
Of all unseen.'

Here the words 'superbos,' 'dives,' 'Ilio relicto,' and 'iniqua Trojae,' found in the original, are ignored in the translation. In the twelfth ode, too, we miss no little when, as an equivalent for

' Sæva paupertas et avitus apto
Cum Lare fundus,'

we have

' Your sire's transmitted poverty,
For conquest rear'd.'

Perhaps the completest instance of weakness of rendering is to be found in Book iii. Ode xi. Every one recollects Hypermnestra's words :

' Que, velut naeta vitulos leane,
Singulos, cheu! lacerant. Ego illis
Mollior, nec te feriam, neque intra
Clastra tenebo.'

' They, as *she-wolves* a bullock rend,
Tear each their victim. I, less hard
Than these, will slay you not, *poor friend*,
Nor hold in ward.'

We could forgive the *she-wolves* doing duty for 'liasses'; but, metre or no metre, rhyme or no rhyme, it would have been more tolerable to suffer with the other forty-nine bridegrooms at the hands of their bloodthirsty cousins, than to be addressed in such mauldin accents as 'poor friend,' a mild phrase which Horace would have repudiated. But it is needless to multiply passages to prove this metre no equivalent for the Latin Sapphic. The translator's preface partially admits it.

We remarked in the outset that accuracy of rhyme might be confidently looked for in this volume. So in the main it turns out. Yet, tell it not in Gath, we find in page 1 *course* rhyming with *ancestors*; in p. 17, *yours* with *oars*; and in p. 49, *fear* rhyming with *Jupiter*. Verily Homer does occasionally nod. We surmised, too, that there would be more stiffness, and less familiarity, in translating such pictures from Horatian love-ditties, as need a dash of Anacreon, or a spicè of Tommy Moore, to do them justice. This suspicion is verified. There is nothing, for instance, in the

last verse of Book II. Ode iv. which the gravest professor need have shrunk from faithfully rendering:

'Brachia et vultum teretesque suras
Integer laudo. Fuge suspicari,
Cujus octavum trepidavit etas
Claudere lustrum.'

But Mr. Conington must have seen a good reason, unknown to us, why he should not 'call a spade a spade,' for he translates thus tamely and squeamishly:

'With honest fervour I command
Those lips, those eyes: you need not fear
A rival, hurrying on to end
His fortieth year.'

Martin does far more justice to the 'sweet face, fine ankles, and tapering arms,' and in several odes of like character (e.g. I. xxv., II. v., and others), which Conington omits altogether, uses 'parliamentary' language, and shocks no proprieties. Perhaps these omissions are due to the professor's own conviction that he is less apt at gay strains than grave. At any rate we must be grateful for what he gives, and gives well, and not exacting with respect to what he gives not, and might have given tamely.

'Non omnia possumus omnes!' Perhaps a picnic translation might not be a bad idea. The bard is so versatile, and has such changeful moods, that one modern, particularly one Englishman, can hardly do justice to them all. Some versions have erred in excessive latitude. Professor Conington, to whose translation we cannot possibly deny great merit, inclines to the other extreme. A joint-stock Horace in English might hit the happy mean.

THE CHRONICLE OF GUDRUN.*

GERMAN scholars are of course familiar with the Gudrunlied, which, in the opinion of most critics ranks second only to the *Niebelunglied*. Founded upon Danish tradition, it was written about the year 1220. A copy of this made in the comparatively recent period of the year 1517, by command of the Emperor Maximilian I. has proved the only means of its preservation to the present day. This was discovered by F. H. Von der Hagen, in the castle of Ambras in the Tyrol, who directly gave it to the world. The poem at once enlisted considerable attention, and was translated into modern German by Simrock. The genuineness of certain passages, which some asserted to be monkish interpolations, became a fruitful source of discussion among the German critics, thus bringing the work still more prominently before the public. The authoress of this translation has given us a free prose version of the original so agreeably rendered that it will, we believe, make the old Norse tradition as popular in this country as it has recently been in Germany.

The story which it relates may be gathered from the following account.

In the land of the Hegelings, on the shores of Friesland, lived Hetel the king and his good wife Hilda. Peace and prosperity smiled upon the land, and Hetel was surrounded by faithful nobles as valiant in fight as they were wise in council. Their only son Ortwin was brave as a lion, while Gudrun their daughter was the world's wonder of a fair maid. Gentle, loving, truthful, the report of her beauty and her virtues was borne by travelling merchants to remote countries, and various princes, enamoured of the description, sought her for a bride.

But Hetel and his Queen Hilda deemed few princes worthy to mate with their child. Her husband they thought should not be taken from the rough mannered people of the north, but should be some mighty Kaiser of the south, such as Attila, King of the Huns. Vain was the suit

of Siegfried, King of Moorland. Equally unfortunate that of Hartmut son of Ludwig and Gerlinta, King and Queen of Normandy. Herwig, King of Zealand, became a wooer also of the peerless Gudrun, but Hetel scorned his offer, like that of the others, because his land was barren and his people poor. Herwig left, vowing in his disappointment that he would make King Hetel rue his pride. Tidings soon afterwards reached the Hegelings that Herwig was gathering his fighting men together. Hetel, however, disregarded the warning, believing the Zealanders a peace-loving, sheep-pasturing race. His own confidence ministered to his ultimate defeat. One morning at sunrise, the castle of Hetel was unexpectedly surrounded by the armed hosts of Ludwig. The trumpets blared forth to battle, the warriors were aroused, and Hetel, shaking his battle axe aloft rode at their head to meet the foe. In the midst of the battle the two kings flew at each other like panthers. Gudrun, who had watched the fight from a window, grew interested in the knight who could accomplish so much for her sake, and half fearing he would fall by her father's hand, stole out of the castle and modestly ventured between the combatants. She besought her father to make peace with his foes till the morrow. Hetel being indeed sorely pressed, acceded to his daughter's prayer, bade the Zealanders to his hall, where their wounds were dressed, and served out meat and wine to them. Herwig once more sought Gudrun for his wife. Love had entered her heart. Hetel and Hilda gave their consent, so the strife between the kings was merged in the solemn act of betrothal which directly followed. But when Siegfried, King of Moorland, heard of Herwig's success, in the bitterness of his anger, he summoned his fighting men and invaded the land of his rival, laying it waste with fire and sword. Herwig was thus compelled to quit his affianced bride to protect his suffering people. On his arrival, he found himself so overwhelmed by the numbers of the foe, that he was obliged to ask aid from the Hegelings. King Hetel at once marched his armies to the assistance of his future son-in-law, defeated his enemies, but unhappily left his lands and castle unprotected. During the absence of Hetel, Hartmut, Prince of Normandy, with the help of his father Ludwig, descended on his coast, sacked the towns, destroyed the crops, and, worse than all, carried off the fair Gudrun, with sixty of her attendant maids. The moment the sad intelligence reached Hetel and Herwig, they made peace with their foe, Siegfried, who united his army to theirs, and seizing some ships, hurried off in pursuit of the Norman, whom they overtook at the Wulpsensand, a lonely desolate island, where they had put in for rest and fresh water. The opposing forces meet neck deep in the sea. The sands become wet with blood, and the fight rages till darkness descends on the scene. The rival hosts sleep, impatient for the renewal of the fight. Hetel, wakeful with wrath, distinguishes Ludwig standing over a watchfire in the opposite camp, and in a loud voice challenges him for the morrow. Ludwig offers to accept the challenge on the instant, a huge fire of pinewood is heaped up, the kings fight and Hetel is slain. The crafty Normans, fearing the vengeance of the Hegeling host at the loss of their beloved king, silently embark their wounded prisoners and sail away in the darkness. The Hegelings wake to find their monarch killed and their foemen fled. Pursuit in the wounded condition of the army is impossible, and the Hegelings are therefore compelled to return to their own land, bearing the bitter news of her double loss to their bereaved Queen Hilda.

Gudrun, though in the very stronghold of her foe, will never consent to her union with Hartmut. The deepest threats, the mildest blandishments, the offers of vast wealth, are not sufficient to pale the hue of her resolution. Her affections remain true to the absent Herwig, the poor king of a barren land. Gerlinta, the mother of Hartmut, a hard cruel woman, takes advantage of her son's occasional absence in the field, to compel Gudrun,

by the adoption of the most degrading measures, to accede to his suit. With this object she imposes on her and her faithful maids the performance of the most menial duties. But even this wicked policy is not enough to make Gudrun swerve from the faith she has sworn. Enraged by the failure of her plan, Gerlinta oppresses her still more. Year follows year, but the unmurmuring Gudrun obeys each behest with the most unwearied patience. Hildeburga, one of her attendants, by her loud speaking, has rendered herself so obnoxious to Gerlinta that she compels her to share the tasks of her mistress. Ill-clothed, barefooted, these two are compelled to go to the sea-shore in the bleak winter to wash the linen of the knights and the household. To the foul and degrading labour thus thrust upon them, to the insults and gibes with which it is accompanied, Gudrun opposes only the most perfect forbearance. Meanwhile a succession of troubles had fallen on the Hegelings. Their land had been ravaged and their crops destroyed. But the execution of deep vengeance which they had sworn for the death of their king on the Wulpsensand, though delayed, had never been abandoned. At the end of thirteen years a fleet had been collected, the nobles summoned, and twenty thousand men placed by the widowed Queen Hilda under the command of her son Ortwin and Herwig the King of Zealand. One day, when Gudrun and her faithful attendant were as usual washing linen in the sea, they were accosted by two strangers, who eventually discovered themselves to be Herwig and Ortwin. Hearing from her lips the story of her wrong, they vow the most complete vengeance, and return to their ships, while Gudrun goes back to the castle in order to lull the Normans into a sense of false security. With the purpose of furthering this project, she pretends assent to her marriage with Hartmut. Great feasting is held, suspicion is disarmed, and in the morning the army of the Dames disembark, fall upon their foe, slay the king Ludwig, lay waste the land, and with a rough lynch-law kind of justice, old Wat of Sturmland, one of the chief warriors, cuts off the head of the cruel Gerlinta with his sword. Subjecting the country to the Danish sway, the Hegelings return in triumph to their own land. The long suffering of Gudrun is rewarded by her union with Herwig the King of Zealand. At her intercession the Norman territory is restored to Hartmut, on condition of his marrying Hildeburga who was the faithfulest among the faithful during her Norman captivity.

TAKEN UPON TRUST.*

'TAKEN UPON TRUST' is undeniably a clever work. The plot, though unnecessarily obscured by too frequently recurring digressions, possesses an interest which fairly enchains the attention of the reader. The characters, though somewhat too crowded on the canvas, are well conceived and artistically portrayed; and it is therefore with the more regret that we are compelled to qualify our praise by taking one grave exception to the design of the author.

The incidents and the people which enact them are too prominently selected from the vicious classes of society. We know, of course, that there are bad men, unvirtuous women, and ladies who have deceived their husbands. We do not even say that such sad proofs of the frailty of human nature should be utterly ignored in a novel. But we are surely entitled to demand that they should be no more obtrusive in the work of fiction than in the hard reality of fact. The author of 'Taken upon Trust' is endowed by so much graphic power, and is, we are sure, capable of so much better things, that it is only just to his own talent to ask him to cast his next work in a fairer mould. It is difficult to give our readers an idea of the plot of a novel which is so fruitful

* The Chronicle of Gudrun: A story of the North Sea. Translated from the Mediaeval German by Emma Letherbrow. Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas. 1863.

* Taken upon Trust. By the Author of 'Recommended to Mercy.' London: Tinsley Brothers. 1863.

in incident, and embodies so many characters. We therefore content ourselves with furnishing a mere sketch of an exceedingly interesting story.

Chrissy, a lady who has already appeared in 'Such Things Are,' a former work of the same author, has been married, anterior to the commencement of the present work, to a Mr. Fletcher, a consummate schemer. A few weeks after the union he is seized with severe illness, and subsequently dies, his death being rightly attributed to poison. Suspicion falls upon the widow, Chrissy, and she is committed on the coroner's warrant to the house of detention. A man named Thompson, who had been a butler in the family of the deceased, but discharged for some thievish irregularity, knows, however, that in a certain escrioire there are some private drawers, the secret of which he understands, and which he believes contain memoranda that might ultimately prove of considerable value to the possessor. With the object of obtaining these, he induces a deformed artful boy named Amilius, who is dependent on him, to steal into the house, enter the room where the corpse lies, examine the drawers, and remove the coveted papers. The boy has the courage to fulfil his mission, but is only successful in securing a small piece of a lady's letter which, with abundance of cunning, he conceals from his employers. The papers had been previously removed by Susan Brigham, a faithful friend and companion of the accused widow, Chrissy. These letters throw a terrible light on the mystery. It is evident from their perusal that the reputation of Florence Bernard, the wife of her cherished friend, had before her marriage, been compromised with the murdered man. She had been alone with him in his last illness, and Susan Brigham conceives her, therefore, to have been the murderer, but resolves to conceal the suspicion of her supposed guilt. Florence is young, handsome, and adored by her husband, Clayton Bernard, who has taken her with an invalid brother to Malta. But Florence is the prey to a guilty conscience, and in her restlessness her husband, availing himself of a yacht lent him by a friend, takes her and his brother on a cruise round the West Indian Islands. Letters reach them from mutual friends in England relating to the approaching trial of Chrissy, and, unable to bear the suspense, a hint is sufficient from Florence to induce her husband to visit England once more. They arrive in time to be present at the trial of the innocent widow. Her friend Susan Brigham is compelled to acknowledge, in her evidence, that Florence Bernard had been alone in the chamber of the dying man. This fact, taken in connection with the circumstance of her former charitable life, is sufficient to ensure the acquittal of the accused, without however directly implicating Mrs. Florence Bernard. The Bernards are generally unfortunate in their matrimonial relations. The invalid brother has been married to a woman who had concealed from him at the time of his union that she was the daughter of a determined criminal, and whom in consequence he has forsaken. The brothers have a sister, Marian, whose husband, Mr. Clavering, is a wealthy Jew, by no means particular in the methods he adopts in the acquirement of his fortune. He is beside a most brutal husband to Marian, who, sharing a mutual attachment with Ernest Audaine — a gallant, good-hearted gentleman — is in a position of considerable social peril throughout the book. Separate from, but afterwards interwoven with the foregoing, there is a second plot. The deformed boy Amilius, who cunningly concealed the scrap of paper he was sent to secure, is the son by a secret Scotch marriage of a girl in humble life, subsequently one of 'the fallen,' and the distant heir of the earldom of Ashington. His father is dead, but the intervening heirs having also expired, the cunning savage, educated in the streets, becomes next in succession to the earldom. All that is required to establish his claim is the marriage certificate, which his own mother had sold to the present earl for 1,000/. This money she had soon spent or been defrauded of, and was only too glad at last to pursue her evil ways in quiet, and

leave her unhappy son to the care of the wicked butler Thompson. The Earl of Ashington is at length roused from his belief that all evidence of the mesalliance in his family is destroyed by an interview with one Redfern, a man to whom years ago he had married a female whom he had seduced. For this insult, Redfern vows vengeance, and accident, after years of waiting, favours his resolve. It is discovered that in the negotiation between the lawyer acting for the earl and the legal adviser of the mother of Amilius, a copy of the important document had been substituted for the original, which is, therefore, still in existence, and which the crafty young hunchback is enabled, by the aid of Redfern, to trace out and produce. The old earl is obliged to yield with good grace, and not only acknowledge his untutored heir, but is compelled to give Redfern large sums of hush money to conceal his share in the disgraceful compact of former years.

In the boy hunchback's soul there dwells a grudge against the butler Thompson, who treated him so savagely. He turns over every circumstance in his active cunning mind which might tend to do him injury. At last he believes he can implicate him in a theft in his former master's house. In the formal depositions which accompany Amilius's application to the magistrate for a warrant against Thompson, the scrap of letter which was found in the escrioire is produced. This implicates Florence Bernard, who is very ill, in the crime of the murder; her writing is recognised, and a warrant issued for her arrest. Ernest Audaine, who in the tale is much more prominent than in this sketch, visits the loving husband, and, in an exceedingly well-written scene, tells him the truth of his wife's former dishonour, and the accusation under which she labours. The husband refuses belief; but his unhappy wife, having overheard a portion of the conversation, issues from her sick room, repudiates all knowledge of the murder, but confesses the truth of the first allegation. Her husband pardons her, but it is too late. She is struck with a mortal illness, but does not die till she learns that Thompson, the butler, has been clearly convicted of the crime of which she had been wrongfully accused.

The novel ends happily. Ernest Audaine, having been apprised of the continued ill-treatment of Marian by the Jew Clavering, visits that individual in his chambers at Norfolk Street. He there accuses him of forging a bill, and threatens discovery unless he desists from ill-treating his wife. The Jew endeavours to shoot him, and a combat ensues, resembling in every detail that between Major Murray and Mr. Roberts. The Jew eventually dies from the effects of the struggle, and his wife becomes Mrs. Audaine. The hunchback, Amilius, also dies, the earldom of Ashington descends to a poor curate, while the invalid brother of Bernard is reconciled to the wife he had left so long.

While we repeat our opinion as to the power displayed in the work, we reiterate our hope that the next effort of the author will have a purer arena for its developement, and be somewhat less complicated in construction.

MRS. EDWIN JAMES.*

DISAPPOINTED with her marriage (which we believe has been already dissolved), Mrs. Edwin James has written a book to prove to the American people how full she is of sentiment and genius — that her marriage was but an affair of convenience on her part, and that her discarded husband was totally unworthy of the noble woman he made use of to serve his own interests. This book takes the form of the life of a beauty, and although the characters pretend to be fictitious, we think we are not far wrong in guessing it to be to some extent an autobiography. At all events, the following account of the heroine's second marriage and husband, corresponds with the received ideas

* *Wanderings of a Beauty.* By Mrs. Edwin James. London: Routledge & Co. 1863.

respecting the marriage of a late popular M.P. in Paris, previous to his departure for America:—

'Among the crowd of English sojourning in Paris this winter, there was an old acquaintance of ours — a certain Sir Percy Montgomery, Bart., late M.P. for —shire. Some six months ago, when in London, Sir Percy had visited Evelyn, and we had dined occasionally at his house in Grosvenor Street. Indeed, the baronet had been at that time a warm though unsuccessful admirer of our heroine. Sir Percy was, in appearance, a perfect "John Bull;" that is to say, he possessed a countenance rubicund and somewhat flat, with no very marked features; figure stout, burly, broad-shouldered, thick-set, you perceived at a glance that the animal nature preponderated in the man; nevertheless, the square and rather massive forehead displayed intellect, and the fine teeth, seen to advantage in a pleasant jovial smile of not unfrequent occurrence, rendered the personal appearance of our friend, if somewhat coarse, not altogether unpleasing. . . . Sir Percy was by no means wanting in brains. He had made some sensation in Parliament; and, having had the tact to speak on the popular side of each question, his fluency was greatly appreciated, and he had thus acquired a higher reputation than his (not first-rate) talents perhaps merited. So the "Times" wondered when he resigned his seat; and the "Herald" and other Tory papers were open in their rather uncharitable surmises, as to the motives for so sudden and untimely a retreat in the late M.P.'

'Sir Percy, having discovered our address at Galignani's, lost no time in paying his respects to Evelyn, and continued his visits from time to time. Evelyn soon named him my admirer, and said it would not be such a bad match; the baronet was of a good family, and reputed rich, though, as some asserted, rich in debts alone. He had, at least, talent, and if I did not object to his lack of personal beauty, and his fifty years, she added, I might do worse than become Lady Montgomery. . . . And so Evelyn took compassion on the injured man, and invited him oftener, and sympathised with his griefs, and was in every way kind to him. Thus did circumstances favour his suit.'

'So it came to pass that society at last coupled their names together, and Sir Percy himself, mistaking the sentiments of one who no longer had a heart to give, made our heroine an offer of his hand in a letter which appeared to me to allude to the lady's fortune rather than to herself. Evelyn answered that she would take time to consider the proposal, provided Sir Percy could assure her on his honour as a gentleman that there was no blemish attached to his name. This assurance, as may be imagined, the baronet readily gave. My dearest friend then spoke to me fully and confidentially; frankly confessing that she no longer hoped for happiness on earth, she at the same time added, that she was anxious to marry, hoping that, enshrined within the sacred precincts of a husband's home, and safely sheltered by his protection, she should have strength to crush for ever from out of her heart that now guilty passion which still tortured her.'

'That same day Evelyn wrote an acceptance to Sir Percy Montgomery.'

'It was in her second wifehood that Evelyn, Lady Montgomery, first set foot on the shores of the New World. Our voyage across the broad Atlantic had been devoid of incident and untroubled by storm. An occasional squall, it is true, would banish us for a day to our heaving couches, where prostrate and utterly helpless, we felt as if our head, detached from our shoulders, were rolling about the cabin, and the malignant sprites of ocean were recklessly and remorselessly sporting with it as with a football.'

'Our heroine had been wedded about three months. Was she blessed in her second union more than in her first marriage?'

'My kind and gentle readers, she was not happy, yet she was content. But had she ever before in-

duinged in any illusions as regards Sir Percy, they must have quickly faded. Even on returning from the church, his bride at his side, not one word of affection did the newly-made husband utter; of himself alone he spoke — *his position, his future*; but then, to be sure, he was turned of fifty, and, as Byron observes, rather than one husband at that mature age, —

“ ‘Twere better to have *two*, at five-and-twenty.”

“ This was the beginning of sorrows.

Immediately after the breakfast, the impatient bridegroom, anxious, doubtless, to embrace the fair lady he dared now call his own, knocked at the door of her chamber, where, divested of her bridal costume, she was arraying herself in a becoming travelling toilette. When admitted, the grateful lover begged — now guess, dear ladies, I pray, what — why, for the loan of a few hundred francs to pay his bill at the hotel. Rather early, methinks, to usurp marital rights over his wife's purse. Poor Evelyn's next fit of disgust was on the morrow of her bridal, when, in an elegant morning robe of the freshest muslin, her hair braided under the prettiest of caps, she with horror beheld Sir Percy enter the room unwashed, uncombed, unbraided, and perfectly innocent of a clean shirt. Seating himself at the breakfast table, he commenced feeding, utterly unconscious of having committed an unpardonable crime against good manners. Unfortunate Evelyn! so refined, so fastidious, so exquisitely neat and clean in her personal habits, to be brought to this. “ Oh! what a falling off was there!”

Sir Percy united in his own person those opposite defects which in others are usually compensated by corresponding virtues. He was at the same time a spendthrift, and the meanest of men. Hasty and imprudent, yet sly and cunning, with an appearance of frankness, he combined an utter disregard of truth. He seemed to lie for the pleasure of lying. His temper was alike quick, vindictive, and revengeful, and his character comprised the opposite qualities of weakness and obstinacy. A general lover of the female sex, he was utterly incapable of individual attachment. It was clear that the baronet had married for money, but finding that his wife contented herself simply with paying their mutual expenses, and refused to place her fortune in his power, he actually began to dislike her, and made no secret of the feeling. One illustration I will give, and this is but a solitary instance of the extraordinary line of conduct pursued by Sir Percy towards her he had so recently sworn to love, protect, and cherish, during the term of their natural life.

Angered one night because Evelyn had left him a small portion of his own travelling expenses to pay, he rang up the servants of the hotel at midnight, and though we were to start on the following morning at break of day, he ordered his luggage to be transported and his bed made in a room at the most distant end of the corridor, thus making himself and his wife of a month, the laughing-stock of the hotel. We do not pretend the man was altogether devoid of good impulses; but the evil of his nature was strong — the good feeble. He was ungrateful, heartless, unprincipled. Evelyn had before known only the reverse of the picture; she had been adored, petted, spoiled. How could she conceive so exceptional a character as that of Sir Percy? How bear with him? Dear friends, she did bear with him, and she was not wretched, for she now knew that all trials are the just retribution for past sins committed, past duties unperformed.

The Beauty is married twice, but her heart is never in her husband's keeping. She is always in love with some brave and handsome man; and the ‘Wanderings’ are therefore principally occupied with a history of her misplaced affections. Compliments are freely lavished on the American people; and we regard this book in the light of an advertisement to the ‘States’ that there is a charming gushing woman among them who has been grievously wronged, but who is still open to the

inspiration of sentiment of the tenderest kind. A handsome portrait of the authoress accompanies the volume.

CECIL BEAUMONT.*

THIS is another weak contribution to the world of fiction. The characters are shadows, the incidents improbable, and the writing is up to the standard of what we meet with in young ladies' letters. The *dénouement*, by which the hero is suddenly enriched by a gentleman whose life he saves, is as new as it is startling, and would make a successful conclusion to a Victoria melodrama. Our readers shall judge for themselves of Mr. Saville's inventive powers, by a short account of the adventures through which Cecil passes to arrive at the haven where all the happy characters of fiction meet to enjoy uninterrupted felicity.

‘Cecil Beaumont’ is the history of a gentleman whom the author accidentally met during his travels in France some years ago. This gentleman invited him to his house, showed him great hospitality, and at parting presented him with a manuscript story of his life, which is as follows: —

Cecil Beaumont is the only son of a locksmith, who is living with his wife and a son and daughter, Alice, in the small town of Cusset in central France. Simon Beaumont, the father, had formerly been a sergeant of the Imperial Guard. His mother is a guileless and good woman, many years younger than her husband. They doat upon their son, who at a very early age displays symptoms of unusual intelligence. He is sent to school, the master of which, Monsieur Cecil Dumas, had been his sponsor at the baptismal font. This worthy man soon calls upon Cecil's father, and tells him that he is no longer able to instruct his son, who already knows as much as he can teach him. He advises that he be sent to a neighbouring royal college, and this is accordingly done. Here Cecil makes great advances in learning, and carries off four first prizes. An account of his success is published in the ‘Gazette de Bourbonnais.’ It catches the eye of M. Dubois, the Principal of the Institution of Paris. He goes to Cecil's father, and offers to take Cecil as a pupil, and to board and teach him without any payment. M. Dubois is represented as a man of worldly principles, and it soon appears that he had only a selfish object in taking Cecil on these terms. He gains the merit of Cecil's future triumphs, and he half starves the poor boy so long as he remains with him. At the end of five years he gains the annual University prize, and his master's object being gained, he is sent home to his parents. Here he is most joyfully received by his parents, his sister, and a host of their friends. They join in giving him an ovation of praise and flattery, and end by predicting that he will not fail to turn out a great man. The boy is much impressed with the homage which has been paid him, and already begins to form plans for distinguishing himself still further. The next morning, however, his mother enters his room, and, bewailing his emaciated appearance, begs him to give up all idea of returning to Paris. His father acquaints him with the same wishes, in the shape of commands, and advises him to follow his trade. This Cecil scornfully rejects, and at last he accepts a situation as clerk in an *avoué's* office in the town. Here he behaves well, and earns the good opinion of his master, M. Durosier. The head-clerk is desirous of trying his aptitude for the business. For this purpose he puts into his hands a brief outline of a case which is to constitute an action at law, and directs Cecil to argue it in favour of their client, the Comte de Montauban. It concerns a right of property encroached upon by M. Claude Follain. Cecil enters upon his task with zeal, and terminates his work with intense self-satisfaction. The case is forwarded to a celebrated *avoué*, who returns it, with an angry letter, saying that he does not choose to be made a fool of, and declines doing business with

M. Durosier's office for the future. In consequence of this Cecil is dismissed, but the Comte de Montauban, hearing the circumstances of the case, engages him as tutor to his only son. The boy is foolish and wicked, and Cecil is forbidden by the Comtesse to correct him. On one occasion he hurls a candlestick at his tutor's head, and injures him severely. The Comtesse reproaches him for not being able to control her son, and tells him that he is unfit for his office. He leaves his situation, and determines to try some other way of earning a livelihood. Soon after this he rescues a stranger from the hands of assassins. The stranger is Dr. Didier, a member of the jury of the department of the Seine. Meantime Cecil has studied, and has been made an *avocat*. Through the interest of the Doctor, he obtains an engagement to defend a prisoner accused of murder. He pleads his cause so well, that the man is acquitted. He now receives many briefs, but having peculiar notions of honour, he will not undertake cases with any taint of ‘chicanery or subterfuge.’ Consequently, the more unscrupulous of his profession are preferred to him, and he is again compelled to seek for other work. He becomes a writer of plays, which no manager will accept. He then writes a novel, which he cannot get published. At last, tired of these fruitless schemes for literary greatness, he accepts a situation as manager of a manufactory near Rouen, in which his friend Dr. Didier is a partner. One day, while employed in his usual manner, Dr. Didier comes to the manufactory, bringing with him as visitors the Count and Comtesse de Villeroi, and Madlle. de Marmont, their niece. Cecil instantly falls in love with the young lady, and, in course of time, he almost hopes that she returns his affection. Her uncle, however, has arranged a marriage for her with a Mons. de Varlé, a rich old man, whom she detests. At a ball given by the Comte and Comtesse, an alarm of fire is given. The fire soon gains ground, and Cecil, after performing the most heroic acts, succeeds in saving the life of the Comte, and of Clemence de Marmont his beloved. But the Comte has been informed of the humble origin of our hero, and he most ungenerously refuses to admit that he owed his life to the locksmith's son. He is still more resolved upon his niece's marriage with M. Varlé. She refuses to obey her uncle in this matter, and he at once suspects her attachment to Cecil. Assuring himself of the truth of this, he grossly insults his preserver, when he calls to inquire after the family. Cecil is now in despair, and he fears he has lost Clemence for ever. He opens his heart to Georges Delcroix, a friend and old schoolfellow, who has become a sergeant-major in a regiment of Zouaves. Georges had assisted Cecil on the night of the fire, and had shown as much bravery. He, Georges, suggests that Cecil should endeavour to see and speak to Clemence. This he does at the house of a mutual friend, and she assures him of her affection for him. The Count and his niece now leave Paris, and Cecil cannot find them. Meantime Cecil has found a publisher for his novel, Catherine de Medicis. He receives a visit from Mons. Deligne, a reviewer, who coolly asks him what he will stand for a ‘regular plastering article’ on his book. Cecil, astonished and indignant, refuses to pay any black mail, whereupon the reviewer promises a damaging critique, which will cause ‘Catherine de Medicis’ to ‘long adorn the publisher's establishment.’ Cecil finds that he has kept his word, and his book is abused in every paper he takes up. Sitting dejectedly in his lodgings, he is visited by Dr. Didier, who says all he can to console him. He also gives him the startling information that the Comte de Villeroi is not of noble blood, but the son of a low usurer, and that he, Cecil, belongs to a family which was once of the greatest consequence. All this the good Doctor has discovered by studies in heraldry. They go to the opera after this conversation, and on coming out our hero is still more astonished to find that he is the possessor of a carriage, a grand hotel, and numerous perquisites. He imagines that he is dreaming of the ‘Arabian Nights,’ and quietly goes to bed in an exquisite

* Cecil Beaumont. By the Hon. Charles Stewart Saville, London: Hurst & Blackett. 1863.

chamber, with the conviction that he shall wake to reality in the morning. The next day brings the Doctor, who explains that he has made Cecil his heir, and that, being very rich and having no natural successor, he had determined to adopt the saviour of his life. Cecil accepts all these good things cheerfully, and determines to visit his home once more. Arrived at Cusset, he finds his mother dead. His father and sister receive him joyfully, and he is informed that his sister is about to marry his friend and schoolfellow, Jules de Baudoin. While at Cusset he receives a letter from the Doctor, telling him that the Count and his Clemence have returned to Paris. He flies to them, and again asks the hand of his love; but the Comte again refuses and insults Cecil. Dr. Didier now takes the affair into his hands. He calls on Comte de Villeroi, and explains that Cecil is of noble birth and that he is not. The Comte at last gives an unwilling consent to the marriage, on the condition that the Doctor does not reveal his antecedents to the world. Alice marries Jules, and Cecil and Clemence are at last made happy. We leave them spending their honeymoon in a beautiful château, made over to Cecil by the doctor, in the enjoyment of every earthly blessing.

GEORGE HARRINGTON.*

GEORGE HARRINGTON is a man of keen intellect, brilliant genius, and great acquirements, whose rare advantages are in peril of being destroyed by an unhappy inclination for drink. The character is well drawn, and possesses nothing of that namby-pamby nature which is too frequently apparent in the heroes of similar tales.

The evil powers of the story are Groby, a commission agent of Glasgow, and his uncle Maginn. This latter, during a residence in India as clerk to a Mr. Barnett, a trader, has been entrusted by his master with his will to take to a place of safety. Before Maginn can execute his commission, Barnett is murdered by the Sepoys, who were then in rebellion, while Colonel Pearson, his intended heir, also falls a victim to the mutineers. Maginn, therefore, brings the will into this country; and finding that Miss Eleanor Pearson, the Colonel's daughter, is residing in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, visits that city, and induces his nephew Groby to obtain an introduction into her uncle's family, enlist her affections, and ultimately marry her. The existence of the will, it must be remembered, is known only to the two conspirators. Groby accedes to the proposal, and, by assuming a garb of religion, secures the requisite introduction to the Pearson's, and eventually so wins upon their regard, that he becomes a constant visitor at their house. Here he meets George Harrington, who has become acquainted with the family through the medium of a schoolfellow, Walter Loraine, who is enamoured of Miss Eleanor Pearson, but who has never possessed sufficient courage to reveal his passion. The great talent of Harrington, who supports both himself and his mother by literary pursuits, renders him the most popular member of the Pearson's circle, and the designing Groby speedily becomes intensely jealous of the influence he possesses. Groby discovers the inclination to drink, against which Harrington so continually combats; and, in conjunction with his uncle, tempts Harrington in such a manner, that he relapses into his old courses, becomes utterly lost, and during the beggary and degradation which follow, his mother dies. Pending the absence of Harrington from the Pearson's, Groby makes such strenuous efforts, that his offer for Miss Pearson's hand is accepted and the wedding-day appointed. During this time Harrington's old friend, Walter Loraine, has sought him out and found him suffering from delirium tremens. Recovering from the attack, he hears of his mother's death, and takes a most solemn oath to abandon the vicious habit which in-

directly led to her decease. This oath he keeps, and prosperity once more returns to him. An advertisement he notices for information relative to the will of the deceased Barnett inserted by an expectant legatee, taken in connection with a conversation which in his dissipated days he once overheard between Groby and Maginn, awakens a suspicion of their true design. Harrington visits London, sees the advertiser, finds a clue, and ultimately, within a few days of the intended marriage, is successful in tracing out the guilt of Groby, and, by a manoeuvre, in getting possession of the important document. The conspirators fly, but are overtaken at Liverpool, where they are tried for a previous offence, and transported. The fair Eleanor, enriched with her legacy, which is of the ample amount of thirty thousand pounds, bestows her hand on Walter Loraine, while George Harrington leaves his native country to seek a new fortune in the Western World.

The author of 'George Harrington' has told his story in a plain, easy style. It is full of incident, and will find admirers outside that special class amongst whom such works are usually circulated.

THE VICTORIA MAGAZINE.*

WE question much whether Miss Faithfull acts wisely in becoming a publisher as well as printer. We doubt the prudence of introducing a speculative element into what should be a sound and legitimate undertaking. In entering into an active competition with other publishers, she divides the energy which should be exclusively devoted to the development of her own admirable printing scheme. Let her be so far satisfied with present success, as to confine her ambition to extending the circle of usefulness in the sphere which she has chosen for her earnest labour. Having already accomplished so much, and with such good result, is it wise to risk a failure, which would throw a blight on the whole movement? We are sure we are the honest advisers of Miss Faithfull, and the best friend of the movement in which we take so great an interest, when we admonish her to hold her hand and not give too many hostages to fortune.

The articles in the opening number are somewhat unequal in merit. The verses entitled 'Victoria' might well have been omitted. Mr. Dicey, whose more elaborate work we noticed in our last number, furnishes an agreeable paper on 'Society in the United States'; and Mr. T. A. Trollope publishes the early chapters of a new tale. The best papers in the number are 'The Journal kept in Egypt in 1855-56,' by Nassau Senior, and a very pleasant readable contribution on the 'Career of Englishwomen in India,' by Meredith Townsend. From the former we learn some particulars of the early career of Mr. Ferdinand de Lesseps, whose labours in connection with the Suez Canal have placed his name so prominently before the European public:—

M. Ferdinand de Lesseps was for some years the French Consul-General in Cairo. His father had filled that post before, and it was mainly by the advice of M. de Lesseps, the father, that the Sultan selected Mehemet Ali to be Pasha of Egypt. Mehemet Ali reposed great confidence in M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, and entrusted to him, in a great degree, the education of his favourite son, Said Pasha, the present Viceroy of Egypt. A few months after Said Pasha's accession, M. de Lesseps visited him at Alexandria. They travelled together to Cairo by the Libyan Desert, and it was during this journey that M. de Lesseps suggested to his host the scheme of a canal through the Isthmus of Suez. It pleased Said Pasha, whose knowledge and enterprise are far above the usual Oriental level, and the result was a firman, dated the 30th November, 1854, by which Said Pasha granted to M. de Lesseps the exclusive privilege of creating a company for the purpose.

* George Harrington. By David Maclae. Glasgow: Scottish Temperance League. 1863.

* The Victoria Magazine. (May.) London: Emily Faithfull.

Mr. Senior and his wife accompanied the commission, which was appointed to examine the scene of operations; and thus became acquainted with Mongel Bey and Linant Bey, two distinguished engineers in the service of the Viceroy. These gentlemen furnished Mr. Senior with some interesting facts as to the administration of the internal affairs of the Viceroyalty. Mongel Bey relates the following instance:—

'One of the first missions on which Mehemet Ali employed me was to report on a matter in which Abdurrahman Bey, a renegade Copt, the governor of the province of Charkieh, was concerned. He was a ferocious tyrant, and extorted money and labour by wholesale torture and murder; but he delighted Mehemet Ali by extravagant promises of improvements. This is the way to please a Turk. A certainty of ten per cent. does not affect him. You must rouse his imagination by the chance of a hundred or two hundred per cent. But the time came when performance seemed to be necessary. The Pasha was becoming impatient, and Abdurrahman had to find some plausible reason why his enormous crops of indigo, and rice, and corn, and sugar were not forthcoming. The excuse which he selected was the want of water. He required the engineer attached to his government to report that if, by employing forty thousand men for two months, a certain canal of irrigation were made, all would go well. If the canal were refused, he had his excuse. If it were undertaken, he would be able to squeeze out of the wages and food provided for those who made it, a splendid profit. The Pasha was beginning to suspect his governor, and sent me to inspect and report on the proposed canal. One of the Pasha's Beys was with me. "I hear," he said, "unpleasant stories about this man: they say that he saws the Fellahs in two; now I can understand flogging people and hanging them, but I cannot stand sawing. If that be true, I really cannot take his coffee."

'Abdurrahman met us at the frontier of his government, and mounted me on one of the finest horses that I ever saw. "Of course," he said to me, "you will condescend to accept him. I should be disgraced before my people if it were suspected that I had allowed so great a man to depart without a slight mark of my devotion, or that my humble offering were rejected." We took our places on the divan, and before coffee was brought, the Bey said to him, "I am told that you practise an original mode of keeping your people in order: that you put them between a couple of boards, and saw them in two." "I have tried it," answered the governor, "but it did not answer. I have given up the practice." Coffee was brought, and the Bey drank his. "If he had continued the practice," he said to me afterwards, "I would not have drunk with him, but as he has given it up, *c'est égal*."

In Mr. Townsend's paper we have little glimpses of Indian society, which give an admirable idea of its interior life. The paper details the experiences of a young lady, the wife of a gentleman in the Indian Civil Service. Her first sensation, on arriving at the distant station was the feeling of being not so far distant from England:—

'Her past life seems like a dream, it is so far away, and yet England itself has become so strangely near. She had thought always of the two countries as if they were separated by almost impassable distances, but the overland route destroyed that impression, substituting an equally false one of propinquity. The knowledge acquired at Ceylon that India is not even the far East, that Shanghai, for example, is as far from Calcutta as Madras from Southampton, increases the sense of nearness, which increases with every arrival of letters only a month old, and becomes one of the most marked peculiarities of the Anglo-Indian. He has never an idea of distance, thinks fifty miles nothing to traverse to see a friend, and wanders over England as if it were but an extensive garden.'

The home of the couple is thus described:—

'Her new home is a low long house with a flat roof, looking something but not much like an Italian garden residence. In front is a broad colonnade,

whose columns are concealed by light green vennians, and further shaded by falling curtains, made of a dark green reed. In this colonnade lounge, or sit, or smoke, the servants in attendance. Inside are two lofty halls with whitewashed walls, no ceiling except painted beams and rafters, no floor except beaten lime and brickdust, and for carpet a firmly stretched greenish yellow mat. Carpets are seldom used, as they harbour insects, and for the same reason curtains are avoided. The furniture has been purchased of the last tenant, and though good and solid—veneer is not used in Bengal—looks frowsy and dingy. Doors by the dozen, nearly as high as the rooms, lead into the bed-rooms and the colonnades, and suggest that total absence of privacy which is the first feature of Indian household life. If Kate kisses her husband it must be elsewhere, for in the public rooms forty eyes are incessantly on the watch, eager to note the faintest change of movement, or occupation, or temper. Kate will by and by come to feel this surveillance intolerable, and arm herself with the Indian's shield, entire disregard for the opinions and feelings of the race among which she lives.'

The almost nomadic life led by the civil servants renders the establishment of a permanent home almost impossible:—

'No man builds anything intended to last, or improves on a large scale, or uses stone where bad brick will "do," or exerts himself to make the "station" one whit better than he found it. Nothing European is permanent except the Government, and to Government therefore every work is left. Almost all houses, therefore, are rotten tumble-down affairs, with thin brick walls and roofs that let in the rain, and floors of lime and brick dust beaten into a paste by human labour, and throwing up clouds of fine dust. No house is painted properly, or polished properly, or furnished properly, and the refinement there is, is in the dwellers alone. Nobody buys pictures, for they would be spoilt by removals, or books, "they are such a bore to carry," or the hundred nameless treasures which gradually fill the home of the decent English householder. Men with five thousand a year live like Irish squires, their doors and windows hungering for years for an hour's carpenter's work.'

Our concluding extract refers to the freedom of Indian society:—

'But surely there is society? Of course there is society, and in some respects Indian society is very pleasant. Nobody is in any difficulties about money, and nobody is pretentious. The freedom from pecuniary care is the one permanent blessing of Indian life, and is as nearly as possible universal. A man may be deeply in debt, or very much pressed for cash, but the incidents of poverty are never close to him. It is his savings, not his expenditure, which his creditors restrict, and he does not feel the difference till he wants to go home. This fact makes society simple, and then Indians conceal nothing. Everybody's income is known. The allowances of the leaders of society are gazetted, and opinion is favourable to frankness. A man will ask you your income with the utmost *sang froid*, and tell you he is deeply in debt without a blush of annoyance.'

'Freedom from pecuniary care, the extinction of thought or talk upon sixpences, outweighs many evils, and is perhaps a counterpoise for the sickening monotony of Indian Mofussil life. The tales of "Indian luxury" are stories simply, having no more basis than the idea that India, in which the most eatable fruit tastes like tallow soddened in turpentine, is a land of luxuries for the palate. But happiness does not depend on luxury, and the Englishwoman who can escape the "English fever," the horrible maddening hate of India, which so often seizes its residents, and which is more like a disease than a feeling, may live as happily in India as in the exceedingly tiresome country town, which, in most essentials of life, it very closely resembles.'

GOSSIP.

CAPTAIN LASCELLES WRAXALL, the author of several well known books, and a contributor to many of the literary periodicals of the day, has succeeded to the baronetcy of his uncle, Lt.-Col. Sir W. Lascelles Wraxall, who died at Passy, Paris, on Saturday last (May 2nd).

Miss Mary Ann Griffin, sister of Gerald Griffin, the author of 'The Collegians' and several other popular Irish novels, has died in New York. She was born in Limerick.

M. Proudhon's long-announced pamphlet, 'Les Démocrates Assermentés,' has appeared.

A paragraph has been going the round of the papers — evidently in the Southern interest — to the effect that certain publishers of Mobile have sent Sir E. B. Lytton 1,000 dollars, as their estimation of copyright due to him on their reprint of his 'Strange Story.' The story is certainly *ben trovato*, but is unfortunately not true, as we have the author's authority for saying. It is certainly to be wished that such an undeniable act of justice would be carried out throughout the South; but it happens that the inference intended to be drawn is most unjust to the North, Sir Bulwer Lytton having received, nearly two years since, more than double the amount named, from a New York publisher.

Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall, & Co. published, on the 1st inst., the first number of a new monthly periodical, price half-a-crown, entitled 'The New Review, Political, Philosophical, and Literary.' The Review will exclude fiction, and will deal chiefly with political questions — home, foreign, and colonial — from the Conservative point of view.

The French Academy of Sciences has named Admiral Fitzroy corresponding member for the section of geography and navigation, in the room of the late Sir James Clark Ross.

Count Walewski, the 'Indépendance' states, has just given a fresh proof of his solicitude for literature, by granting a pension of 3,000fr. to M. Théophile Gauthier.

We believe Mr. J. F. Maguire, M.P., has nearly completed the work on which he has for some time been engaged, and which is to be entitled 'Father Mathew: a Biography.' Mr. Maguire, who was one of Father Mathew's closest friends, has collected materials which will form a complete exposition of the career and character of the great temperance advocate, the change he effected, and the condition of the people among whom he laboured.

It is understood that the vacant examinership in political economy at the London University has been conferred on Dr. W. B. Hodgson, formerly of Manchester.

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES.—The excavations in progress at Rome, by the Emperor's orders, under the direction of the Chevalier Rosa, in the Palace of the Caesars, now the property of France, continue to produce very interesting results. M. Rosa has already been able to determine the limits of the Palace of the Caesars, and has discovered several spacious halls placed round a very extensive peristyle. The first of these is 120 mètres in length, and the second 45 mètres. He has also ascertained the position of the Capitoline Hill, mentioned by Martial, Suetonius, and Ovid; and near this hill, the Porta Aulica of the Palace, corresponding with the Porta Mugionis of the city. Within the last few days extensive underground constructions have been found, which are supposed to have been part of the Thermae of the Imperial Palace.

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ROYAL LITERARY FUND.—The SEVENTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY DINNER of the Corporation will take place in Willis's Rooms on WEDNESDAY, the 13th May, the Right Hon. Earl Stanhope, President of the Corporation, in the Chair. The Stewards will be announced in future Advertisements.

OCTAVIAN BLEWITT, Sec.

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